

Message Text

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GENEVA PLEASE PASS AMBASSADOR YOUNG

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS ON
AMBASSADOR YOUNG

GENEVA PLEASE PASS AMBASSADOR YOUNG

FOLLOWING IS FROM TRANSCRIPT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEWS
CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON THURSDAY NIGHT JULY 20:

QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, WHAT EFFECT HAS THE STATEMENT
MADE BY AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG HAD ON YOUR
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN, AND DO YOU AGREE WITH HIM THAT THERE
ARE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE UNITED STATES?

ANSWER: THE STATEMENT BY ANDY YOUNG WAS UNFORTUNATE AND I
DO NOT AGREE WITH IT -- I DON'T THINK THERE ARE THOUSANDS
OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THIS COUNTRY. HE WENT ON TO
EXPLAIN WHAT HE MEANT, THAT 10 TO 15 YEARS AGO DURING THE
CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATIONS AND DEBATES, THAT HE AND OTHERS
WERE IMPRISONED BECAUSE OF THEIR BELIEF THAT THE LAWS OF
THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE CHANGED. THEY WERE CHANGED,
WE MADE GREAT PROGRESS, AS ANDY YOUNG POINTED OUT.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 USUN N 02979 211747Z

THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT I'VE DISCUSSED WITH ANDY YOUNG; HE
KNOWS THAT I DISAPPROVE OF HIS STATEMENT. I DO NOT AGREE.
WE HAVE, I THINK, PERSISTED IN OUR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITMENT
IN SPITE OF THAT STATEMENT. AND I DISCUSSED THIS WITH
ANDY YOUNG AND I DON'T BELIEVE THAT HE WILL MAKE A SIMILAR
STATEMENT AGAIN.

THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT ANDY YOUNG HAS BEEN AND IS VERY VALUABLE TO OUR COUNTRY. HE'S OPENED UP NEW AREAS OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MUTUAL TRUST AND COOPERATION AMONG

THE NATIONS OF AFRICA IN PARTICULAR. AT ALMOST THE SAME TIME WHEN ANDY MADE THAT UNFORTUNATE STATEMENT HE HAD BEEN REMARKABLY SUCCESSFUL IN BRINGING ABOUT A CONCLUSION OF THE NAMIBIAN QUESTION, WHICH COULD HAVE EXPLODED INTO A VERY UNSATISFACTORY CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

SO I KNOW THAT ANDY REGRETS HAVING MADE THAT STATEMENT, WHICH WAS EMBARRASSING TO ME. I DON'T BELIEVE HE WILL DO IT AGAIN.

QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, NEWS SECRETARY POWELL HAS INDICATED THAT IN THE FUTURE WHEN U.N. AMBASSADOR YOUNG SPEAKS OUT ON ISSUES SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS THAT PERHAPS THIS WILL BE A SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION AT THE WHITE HOUSE BEFOREHAND, PERHAPS INDICATING THAT HE MIGHT REQUIRE YOUR PRIOR APPROVAL ON A NUMBER OF TOPICS. WILL THIS BE THE CASE?

ANSWER: NO, I DON'T THINK SO. I TRUST ANDY TO REALIZE THAT HE WILL BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE. IT WOULD BE ALMOST A FULL-TIME JOB FOR ME IF I TRIED TO ASSESS EVERY STATEMENT THAT ANDY YOUNG AND OTHER AMBASSADORS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 USUN N 02979 211747Z

MAKE, OR OTHER OFFICIALS WHO HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT DIRECTLY WITH THE PRESS, AND I DON'T INTEND TO GET INTO THE CENSORING BUSINESS. I HAVE TO TRUST THE SOUND JUDGEMENT OF THOSE -- I'VE MADE MISTAKES MYSELF AND I TRY TO CORRECT THEM IN THE FUTURE. I THINK IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE ANDY MADE A MISTAKE AND I THINK HE'LL TRY TO CORRECT IT ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE.

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